

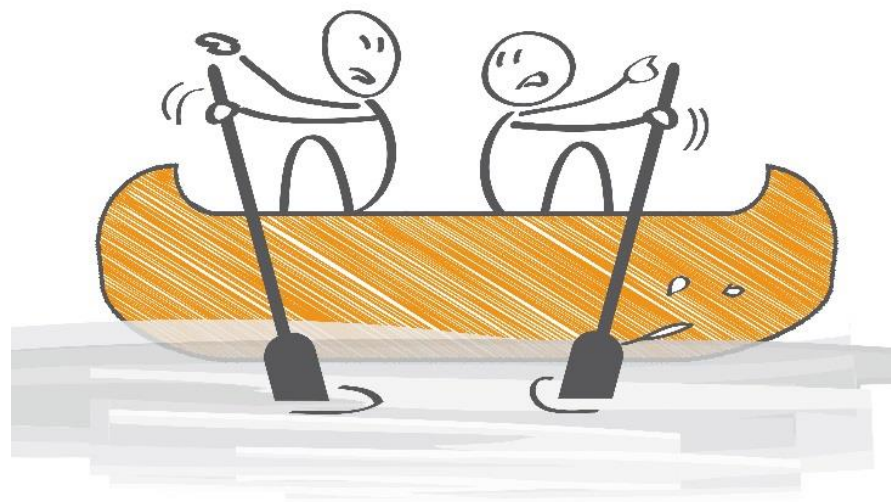


*Work Well. Live Well.*  
**Be Well.**



# Staying Calm Under Pressure: Dealing with Difficult Situations at Work

May 8, 2019





# Welcome!



## **Moderator:**

**Marissa Frieder**

**Senior Program Manager  
WorkWell NYC**



## **Presenters:**

**Sethu L. Nair, Conflict  
Resolution Specialist**

**Halley B. Anolik, Director of  
Education and Training  
The Center for Creative  
Conflict Resolution at OATH**



# WorkWell NYC

WorkWell NYC seeks to create **workplaces** that help our employees live **healthy**, active lifestyles, and to provide health and well-being services, programs, and resources at the **worksites** and beyond.

MOVE  
MORE >>>



TAKE  
ACTION





# Upcoming Webinars



**May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 12:30pm**

**Got Loans? Leverage Your  
City Job to Pay Back Your  
Student Loans**



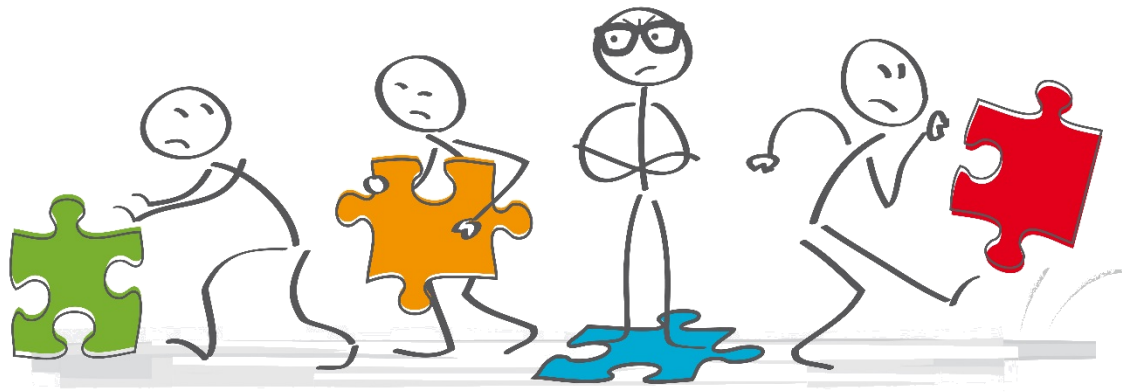
**June 12<sup>th</sup>, 12:00pm**

**Resilience for a Healthy Life:  
Mental, Physical, and  
Emotional Wellbeing**



# What is Conflict?

- Conflict is what happens when there is disharmony in how we relate to each other.
- Experienced on different levels:
  - Perception
  - Emotion
  - Behavior





# Why should we care about conflict at work?

- **85%** of workers experience conflict on the job
- Employees spend approximately **2.8** hours per week dealing with conflict
- Common sources of conflict: workload and stress

**Conflict  
management  
training**



**Positive  
outcomes  
from conflict**



# Conflict and Personal Wellness

- Fractured Relationships
- Stress
  - Physical pain (headaches, stomach pain)
  - Mental anguish (confusion, disorientation)
  - Emotional impacts (fear, sadness, anger)
- Loss of interest and motivation at work
- Taking it home and/or bringing it to work



*“Holding on to anger is just like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die.” – Buddha*





# Conflict and Organizational Wellness

- **Agency Wellness**
  - **Wasted Time**
  - **Lower Motivation**
  - **Increased Turnover**
    - **Impact on those that stay**
  - **Inefficient Work Flows**







# The What and How of Conflict



# Duality of Conflict



Think of **one** conflict that you have been in.

What is the **first** word that comes to mind when you think of that conflict?



# Duality of Conflict

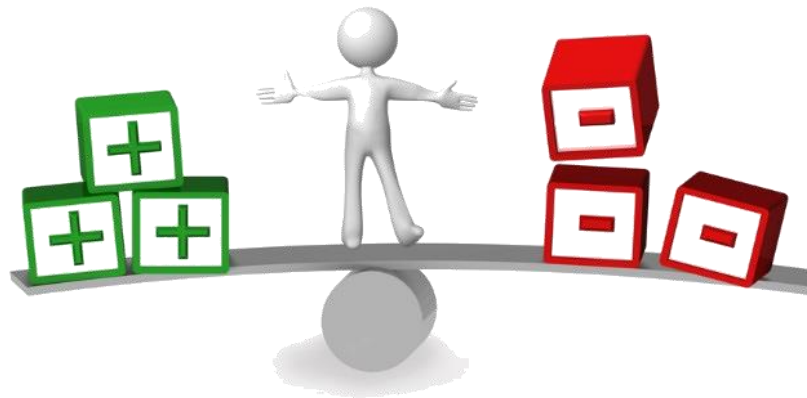
- What do these words have in common?
- What does that tell us about conflict?
- Is that all there is?





# Duality of Conflict

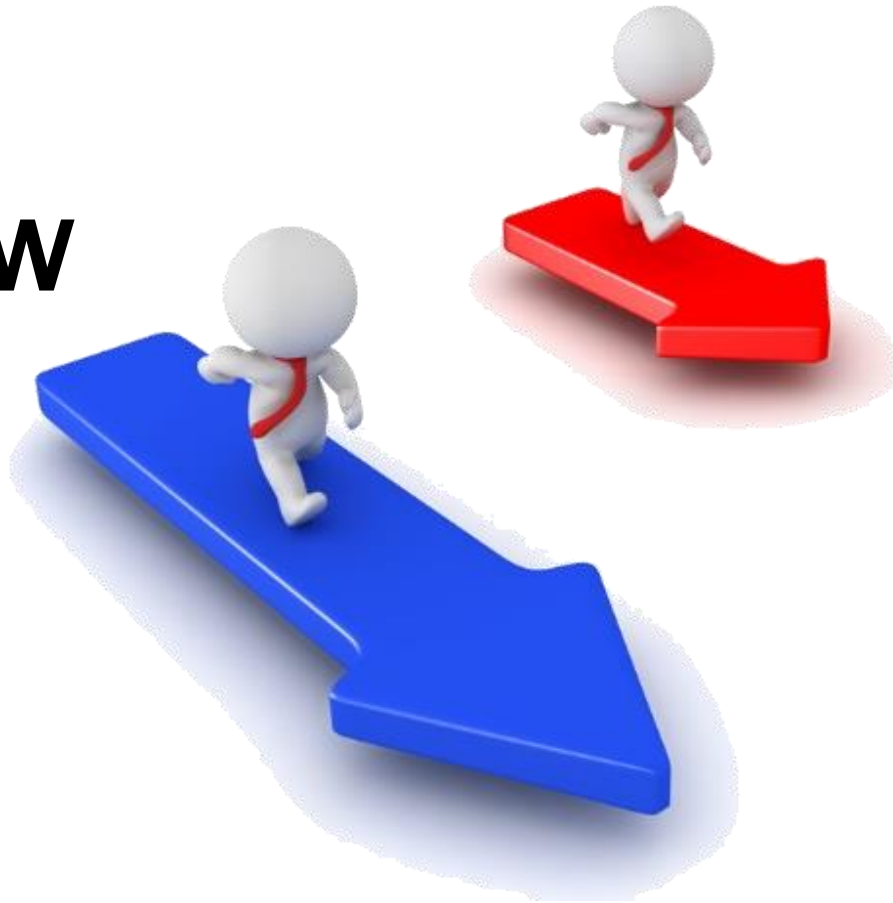
- Conflict can be **constructive** or **destructive**
- What actions are **we** taking?
  - Will they maximize the potential positives in conflict?
  - Will they keep us in the negative experiences of conflict?
- Need to have bifocal vision





# Bifocal Vision

**How**



**What**



# The “What” of Conflict

## WHAT!?

- The substance of the conflict, e.g.:
  - Unequal assignments
  - Deadlines
  - People’s behaviors or personalities
  - Organizational barriers



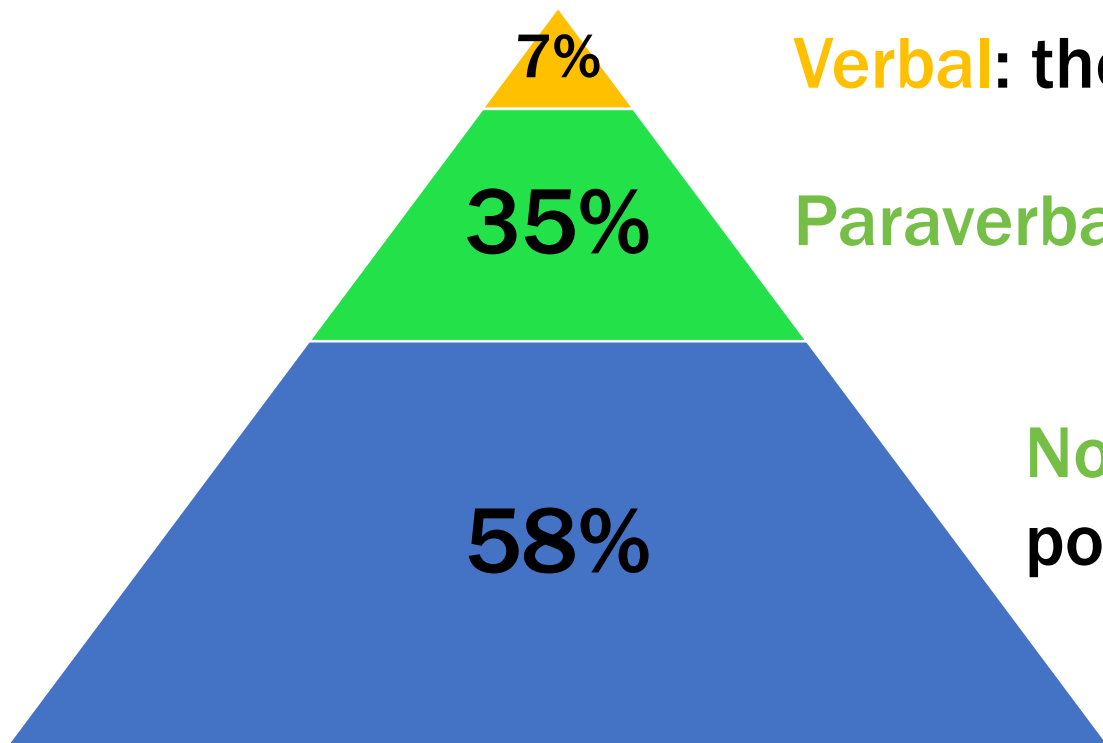
# The “How” of Conflict

- The ways we engage in conflict
  - Blaming vs. “I” Statements
    - Blaming: You are always late on assignments.
    - “I” Statement: I am frustrated because when I receive assignments after the deadline it pushes back my timetable. What is leading to the assignments being turned in late?
  - Making assumptions vs. asking questions
    - Closed vs. open questions
      - Closed: Did you finish the assignment on time?
      - Open: Why haven’t you finished the assignment on time?
  - Speaking vs. listening





# How We Say Things Matters



**Verbal:** the words we say

**Paraverbal:** our tone, pitch, speed, silence

**Nonverbal:** body language, posture, eye contact

*“What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say” – Ralph Waldo Emerson*



# How Our Brains React to Conflict



# What is our brain doing?

## Lower Mind

- Reptilian
- Mammalian

## Higher Mind

- Neocortex
- Prefrontal Cortex





# “Survival” Brain

## Reptilian brain:

- Our most basic brain
- Function: survival
- Responsible for fight vs flight
- Amygdala hijack
- Question it asks: Am I safe?



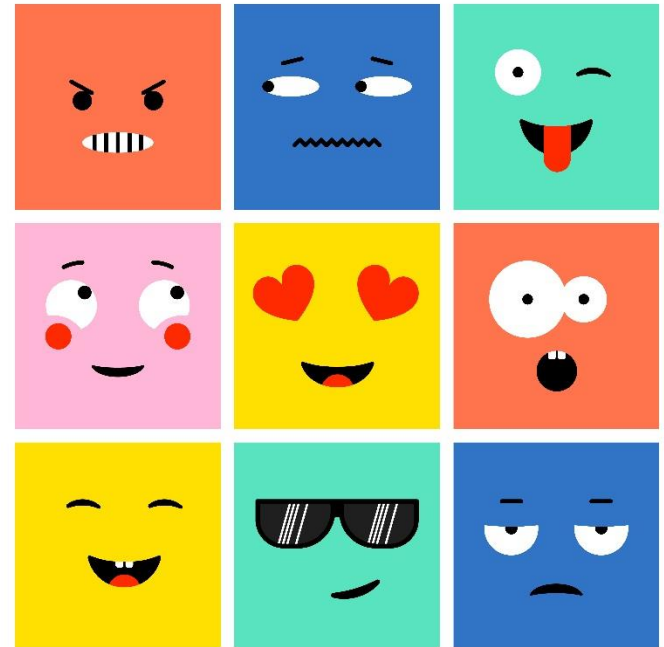
NYC  
COLLECTIVE



# “Feeling” Brain

## Mammalian brain:

- Emotion/feeling brain
- Function: to process emotions
- Question it asks: Am I seen?

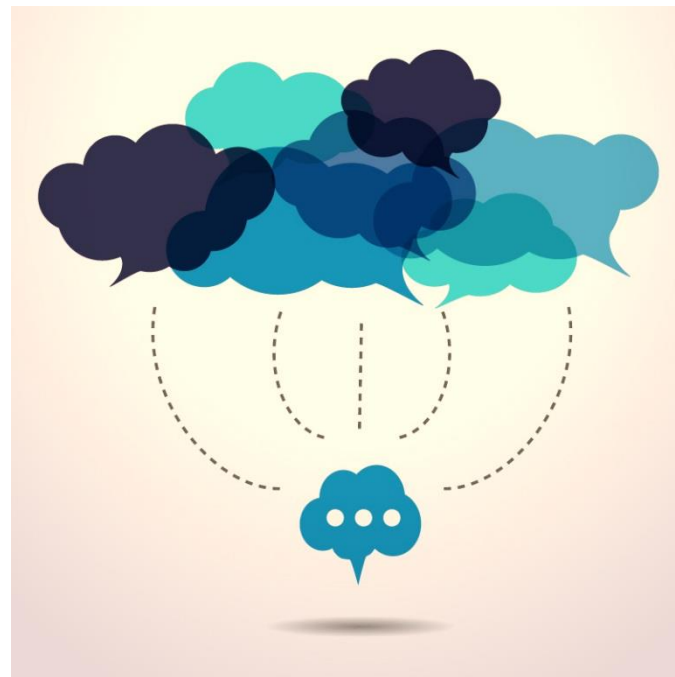




# “Analytic” Brain

## Neocortex:

- Our rational, thinking, analytic brain
- Function: reasoning
- Question it asks: Can I make sense of this?





# “Big Picture” Brain

## Prefrontal cortex:

- Our insightful, perspective-taking brain
- Question it asks: Is there something I am not seeing? What else is there?







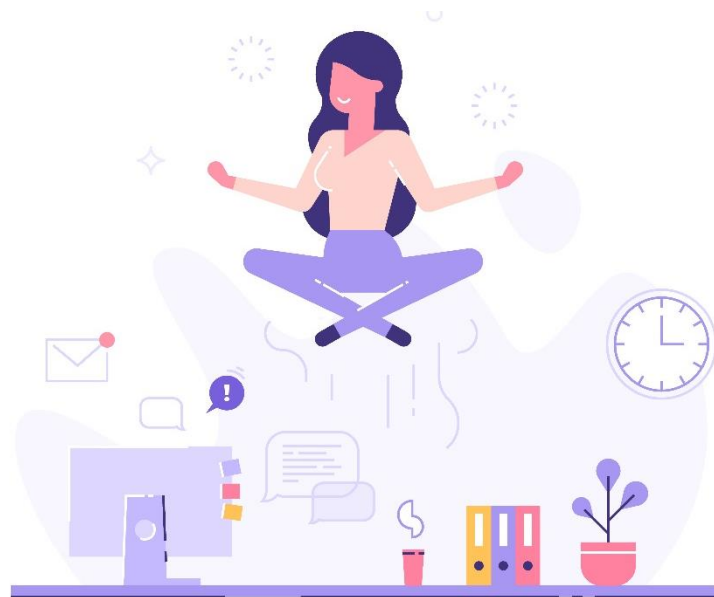
# Learning How to Respond vs. React



# How to get into your higher mind

## 1. Slow down

- Acknowledge bodily cues
- Create space
  - Become aware of your breath
  - Breathe consciously
  - Take a walk
  - Drink water
  - Talk to a trusted friend or co-worker





# How to get into your higher mind

## 2. Check in with yourself

- Register your emotions (“I’m impacted, I don’t want to react”)
- Identify your emotion
  - Anger →
    - Shocked, Disconnected, Burnt Out
    - Sad, Mad, Happy: There is more than this!
- What matters to me:
  - My positions
  - My needs
  - My values





# Check in with yourself

I feel sad



I am not included in social activities



I feel isolated, disconnected, and rejected.



I need belonging, connection, and recognition.



# How to get into your higher mind

## 3. Take action

- Choose a HOW:
  - That takes advantage of what's positive
  - That meets your need
- Other things to consider:
  - Timing
  - Environment
  - Who else needs to be involved?
  - Is this something for you to take on?
  - What resources are available to me? (including self)





# Self, Then Other

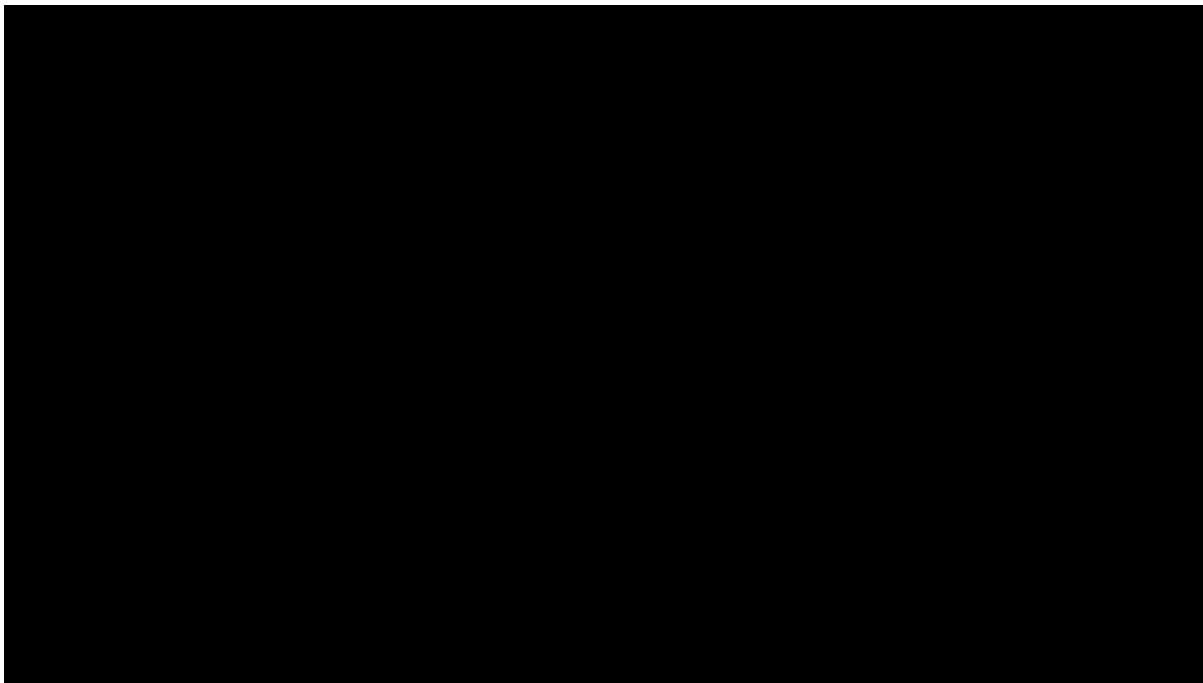
- Only when you step into yourself can you then step into the perspective of the other
- Empathy is a form of perspective taking





# Understanding Empathy

## Brené Brown on Empathy



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Ewgu369Jw>





# Muscle Building



The background of the slide is a repeating pattern of stylized, hand-drawn faces. These faces are created with simple black outlines on a white background. They feature various expressions, including smiling, neutral, and surprised. Some faces have unique features like glasses, a single eye, or different hairstyles. The pattern is dense and covers the entire slide area.

# **The Center for Creative Conflict Resolution at OATH**



# The Center for Creative Conflict Resolution

The Center for Creative Conflict Resolution is a citywide conflict resource center committed to helping NYC employees resolve and find **creative, collaborative, fair and cost efficient responses to conflicts**. Through these efforts, the Center seeks to transform the harmful potential of conflict into opportunities for improved communication, enhanced relationships, greater public trust and positive change.





# The Center's Services

## What they are:

- Workplace Mediation
- Conflict Coaching
- Group Work
  - Restorative Practices
  - Group Facilitation
- Training
- Dispute Systems Design
- Conflict Management Consultation



## How they work:

- Free
- Voluntary
  - Coordinated through a Referring Officer at a Partnering Agency
- Confidential
- Self Determined Outcomes
- On Paid Work Time



# Our Partners







# Contact the Center!



[mediationcenter@oath.nyc.gov](mailto:mediationcenter@oath.nyc.gov) | (212) 436-0813



# Thanks for Attending!

**Questions?** Use the chat box on the right side of your screen.



**We want to hear from you!** Please fill out a brief survey to share your feedback on today's presentation:  
[bit.ly/BeWellWebinar5](https://bit.ly/BeWellWebinar5)